

January 11, 2012

Chief Richard J. Royston
4754 Loch Lomond
Holt, MI 48842

Mr. Shawn Keough
Village of Dexter
8140 Main Street
Dexter, MI 48130

Dear Mr. Keough,

Per our telephone conversation of last week, I have spent time reviewing the proposed merger of the Scio Township Fire Department and Dexter Area Fire Department and offer the attached report and charts to you.

The conversations that I have had with you in the past few days have helped me develop this report and organizational charts. Please keep in mind, as I have kept in my own mind, my familiarity with the integral operations of both the Scio and Dexter fire departments is somewhat limited so there may be issues and functions that just cannot happen the way that I have described them in the attached papers.

In closing, I wish you well on your merger. I am available, with prior notice if you should for any reason want to meet with me to further discuss any of the issues that I have raised. Otherwise, if I can be of any assistance to you in the future, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

Richard J. Royston, EFO
Chief

WWFD Merger Review

Inter Local Agreement

Section 4.12 of the agreement refers to the new Fire Chief reporting to the Chairman of the Fire Board during times that he does not report directly to the Board. In my position, I have heard many stories relative to this type of arrangement, specifically when the Fire Chief and the Chairman begin to disagree on fire department operations, etc. I believe that it would be beneficial for the agreement to specify that the Fire Chief is directly responsible for the operation of the fire department and leave the last sentence off of this particular section of the agreement. The Chief will work for the Fire Board and any issues relative to the operation or the Chief position should be addressed by the entire body and not an individual.

In Section 6.08, the agreement states that a "master service response plan" will be completed within 3 years of the effective date of the agreement. I am not sure that this will be adequate time for a new leader to get a handle on what is needed and where the resources need to be deployed, especially if you hire someone from outside the organization. Although 3 years is a significant amount of time, I envision that the transition phase for changes of this magnitude may take longer than expected, and the new Chief will need additional time to study the department and make these recommendations. You may want to consider changing this to 5 years, which I believe would give adequate time when taking transitional issues into account.

Job Descriptions

Due to the significant resources of both equipment and a combination of full time and part time personnel, the WWFD Fire Chief should have a minimum of a Bachelor Degree and be a graduate of either the Eastern Michigan University Command School or the National Fire Academy Executive Fire Officer Program. Both of these programs are recognized nationally as high level, academic programs. A job of this type demands the best employee possible, and these qualifications are not at all unusual for fire personnel who are seeking a Fire Chief position.

The difference between Scio Township officers (Shift Commanders) and Dexter officers (Lieutenants) needs to be noted. I assume that both groups do the same job, so they should be called by a common name. Officer rank is a very important issue to firefighters. Overall, the future job descriptions and organization of the staffing will more than likely be one of the toughest areas of the merger to deal with.

Transition Plan

The chronological order of the transition appears to be a good one. It is unclear as to which, if either, of the existing fire chiefs are going to be the acting Chief until someone is hired, and if the remaining chief is planning on staying or if both chiefs are leaving. It is important to remember that if all chief officers are staying, these positions deserve the recognition and support that they have had in the past, even though their overall responsibilities may change.

On the transitional organizational chart that I have laid out, I show one fire chief reporting to the Fire Board. I have placed the remaining chief in a position of Deputy Chief who will function as a managerial assistant for the chief in the area of Transition and Personnel. I believe that this position will be very important to the overall transition of the departments into a single department. I have placed one of the paid on-call/part-time Assistant Chiefs from Scio Township on the chart in a position from which he/she can assist the Deputy Chief in the personnel and transition issues, and added the paid on-call/part time Lieutenant from Scio in a position to assist in this area. I foresee that these officer positions would be eliminated after the new chief is hired and the transition is well under way. In support of these positions, I refer to my own department when, in 2003, we moved from an all volunteer force to a combination department when we hired 12 full time personnel. The change was dramatic and the personnel issues were numerous. Many personnel were unhappy about things that could be fixed, and many more personnel were unhappy about things that were out of our control and could not be changed. Positions such as these for transition and personnel would have been very helpful in being able to focus on these transitional issues that arise frequently when changes of this magnitude take place. No one likes change, but fire personnel particularly seem to dislike change more than the average employee.

In review of total number of positions that are transitioning, and compared to an average department, there are more officers than a department of this size usually needs. For the transition period, I have left all officers in place and tried to assign them to a position that will be beneficial to the new fire department. I do however believe that, through attrition, the officer numbers need to be reduced to possibly one chief, one assistant chief, one captain and then a single lieutenant for each shift. It is particularly unusual for a department of this size to have full time assistant chiefs for operations and apparatus. As an example, in the future, the captain could be the training officer with all shift lieutenants reporting directly to him.

I have found that the paid on call personnel of our department need a "go to" person that they feel they can relate to, talk to and confide in. This can be either a senior firefighter or a Lieutenant. In many combination departments, there exists an invisible line between full

time and part time personnel and a position of this type helps eliminate that line. My experience with a blended department of both full time and part time officers is that no
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matter how much authority you try to give the part time officers, and no matter how much you try to treat them the same, the personnel themselves always seem to take for granted that "full time trumps part time." As an example, at the present time, I have full time officers consisting of myself (Chief), Assistant Chief and 3 Lieutenants. Additionally, I have 2 Deputy Chiefs that are paid, on-call positions. These positions existed prior to our conversion to a combination fire department. Although the Deputy Chiefs obviously outrank the Lieutenant personnel, they have at times accused me of taking authority away from them, when in reality they have actually relinquished their authority to the Lieutenants because it was easier than taking command and doing what the organizational structure required them to do. In the final organizational chart, I have placed a Recruitment/Retention Officer in place above the paid, on-call personnel to serve the function of the "go to" person. We have a position such as this on our department that was funded in September of 2011 from the FEMA SAFER grant program, and it works very well.

Although the unions appear to be on board with this merger, more than likely, the biggest issue associated with completion of your plan will be personnel issues. That is why I think that it is very important to have people in key places to keep their thumb on the pulse of the group and be able to "run interference" should the need arise. It will only take one or two naysayers in your group to really make things difficult for the organization.

Deployment of Equipment and Personnel

This specific topic was not studied by me for this report. A great deal of material is lacking in my knowledge to be able to make an informed recommendation to you. Station staffing should depend on types of responses, total responses from each station, number of personnel available and area land uses are all regular issues that are studied to base assignment and deployment of resources. The future fire chief should be well-schooled in making these decisions. In most cases, resource assignment and deployment does not vary a great deal from chief to chief when all issues mentioned above are reviewed.

There are many styles/types of deployment schemes that can be used in departments such as this. A great deal depends on the availability of your part time resources during the different times of days. For EMS, most departments see a curve of increased calls from about 7 a.m. until noon, then a decrease until mid-afternoon when the calls begin to increase again until 11 p.m. or so. From that time until about 7 a.m. the calls are down, and then they start the cycle over again. Department equipment and personnel deployment can be based on this normal curve for EMS. Fire calls are not as predictable.

Training

Under normal circumstances, training for the transitional period and beyond should not be seriously affected. Any training provided prior to the changes should be continued throughout and following the changes. The only change may involve that person or persons who are involved and responsible for assigning and doing the training for that day. It is important to have a single position during the transition that can assign training to keep personnel up to date quickly on what changes are impacting normal operations, building locations and other matters of mutual concern. In the transition organizational chart, I have assigned that duty to the single Captain from Dexter.

Day to Day Operations

Daily operations of the fire department is normally handled by those Lieutenants at the bottom of the command structure unless there is an incident of sufficient size which warrants the upper-level command staff to be involved. When the transition begins to take place, care should be taken by upper command to monitor what is happening closely while at the same time giving those lower level officers the flexibility needed to manage their personnel. With the changes that are going to take place, things will not run smoothly and that is to be expected. Personnel must be given the latitude to make simple, basic decisions on their own, in an attempt to overcome and improve those negative issues.

Closing Comment

During your transition period, I believe that you will find that the fire service is very resilient in one aspect; no matter how many issues surround a department, personnel always function professionally and appropriately in the emergencies. The major problems arise in the times that there are not emergencies taking place. Rumors and gossip during downtime is the villain. The department managers need to keep a close watch during those times and keep these issues in check. Communication is the key. Regular meetings to keep personnel informed of decisions that affect them should be held. Officers of the department must be in support of the decisions that are being made. If they are not in support, they will undermine the organization.

Organizational Charts

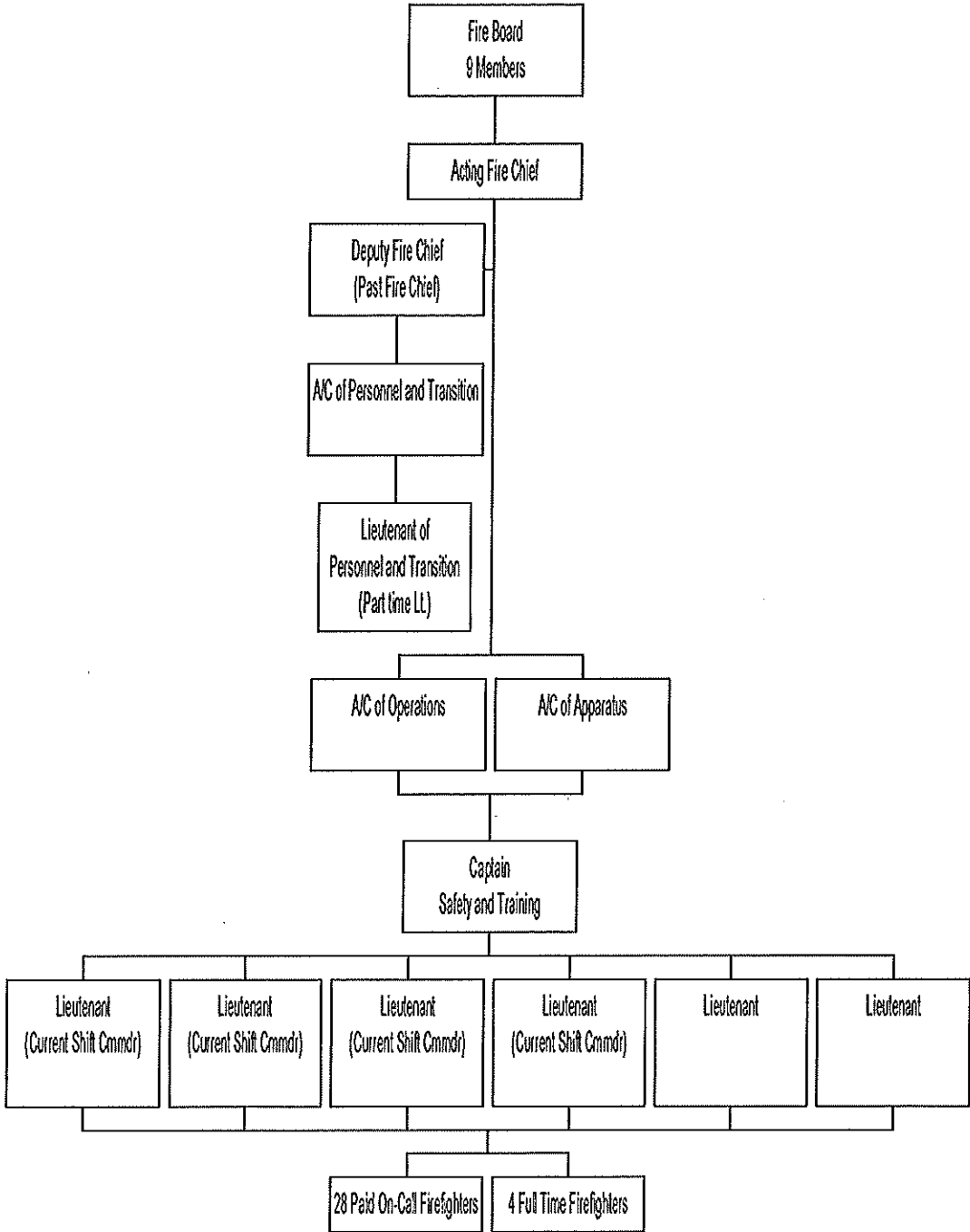
In addition to a Transition Organizational Chart, I have attached four (4) different scenarios which I feel are realistic for future organizational structure. All of them have two things in common. Firstly, they all have provided for 24 hours staffing in the form of a two man staff at the Village of Dexter, a two man staff at Scio Township and a one man staff at Dexter

Township. Secondly, all scenarios will require additional personnel in order to staff the numbers of personnel that are shown. As an example, in organizational plan "C", only existing full time personnel are used, and this will required an additional 10 positions in order to adequately staff these stations at the level described above.

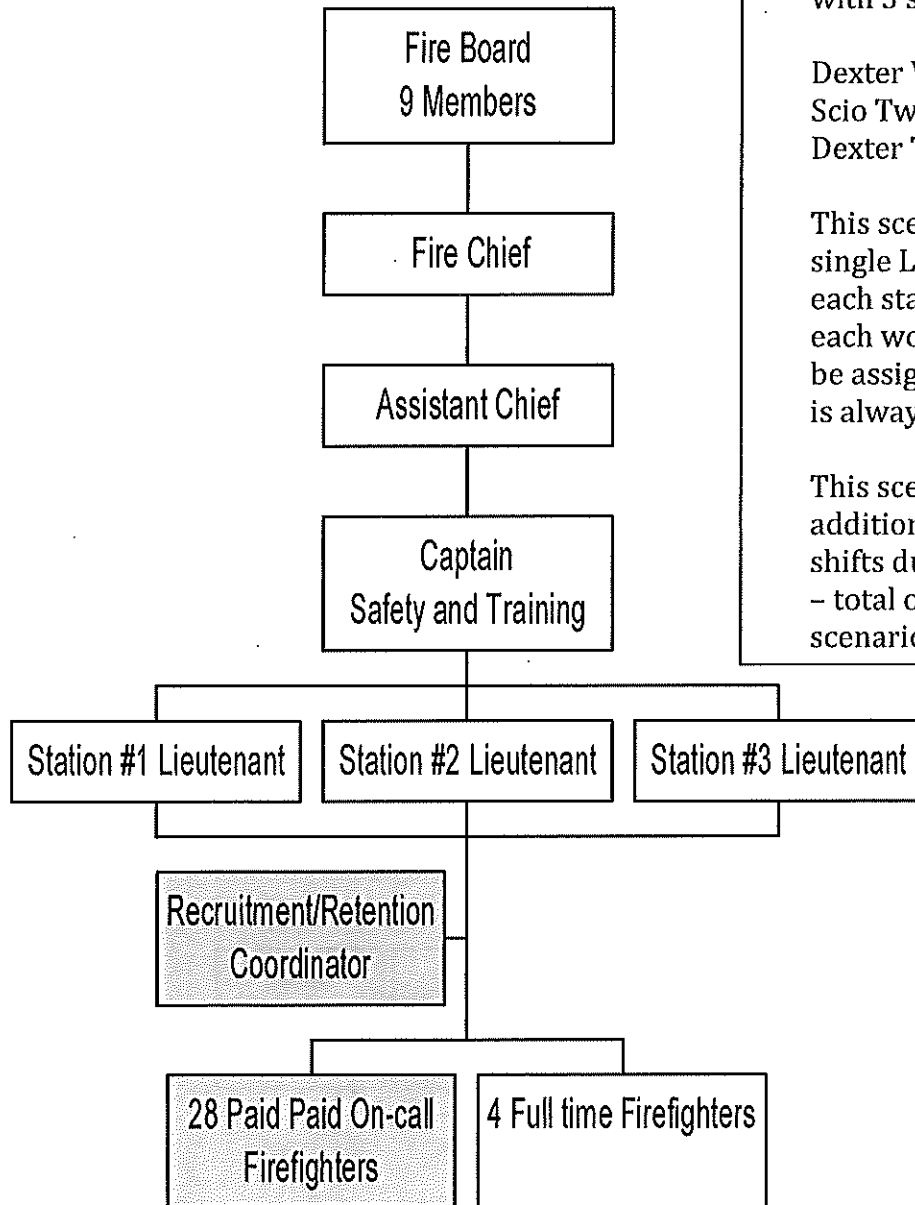
Organizational Chart "A" provides for a full time Recruitment/Retention officer and this will be perceived by many to be a unimportant or "extra" position that is not really needed. In defense of this position, which I show as part time, it is more and more difficult to find adequate part time resources to support a fire department of this type. This RR position's sole duty is to find ways to recruit personnel and maintain personnel on the fire department. It is a mid-level management style position that is given the latitude to go to groups and organizations within the community and find people who want to be a part of the organization. I believe that it is instrumental in maintaining a department of this type in these times when "volunteerism" continues to decline. Again, I want to emphasize that I have shown this as a part time position that should function very well. Additionally, in this scenario, I have also only shown 3 Lieutenant positions with one Lieutenant in charge of each station. Each Lieutenant would be assigned to a different shift so that there was always a Lieutenant on duty, and each day there would be a firefighter in charge of the other stations.

Organizational Charts "C" and "D" both use existing personnel with no additional full time staff. Obviously both of these scenarios will also require additional staffing from part time fill in or hiring of full time personnel to staff to the levels that are suggested.

Western Washtenaw Fire Department
Organizational Chart during Transition Period



Western Washtenaw Fire Department
Organizational Chart A
After Transition Period



Assumptions:

All positions are full time except for part time firefighters

Stations will each have 1 Lieutenant responsible for that station

Assistant Chief is 40 hour/week

Captain is 40 hour/week

Staffing = 5 personnel per 24 hour shift with 3 shifts at each station

Dexter Village - 1 Lt & 1 FF or 2 FF

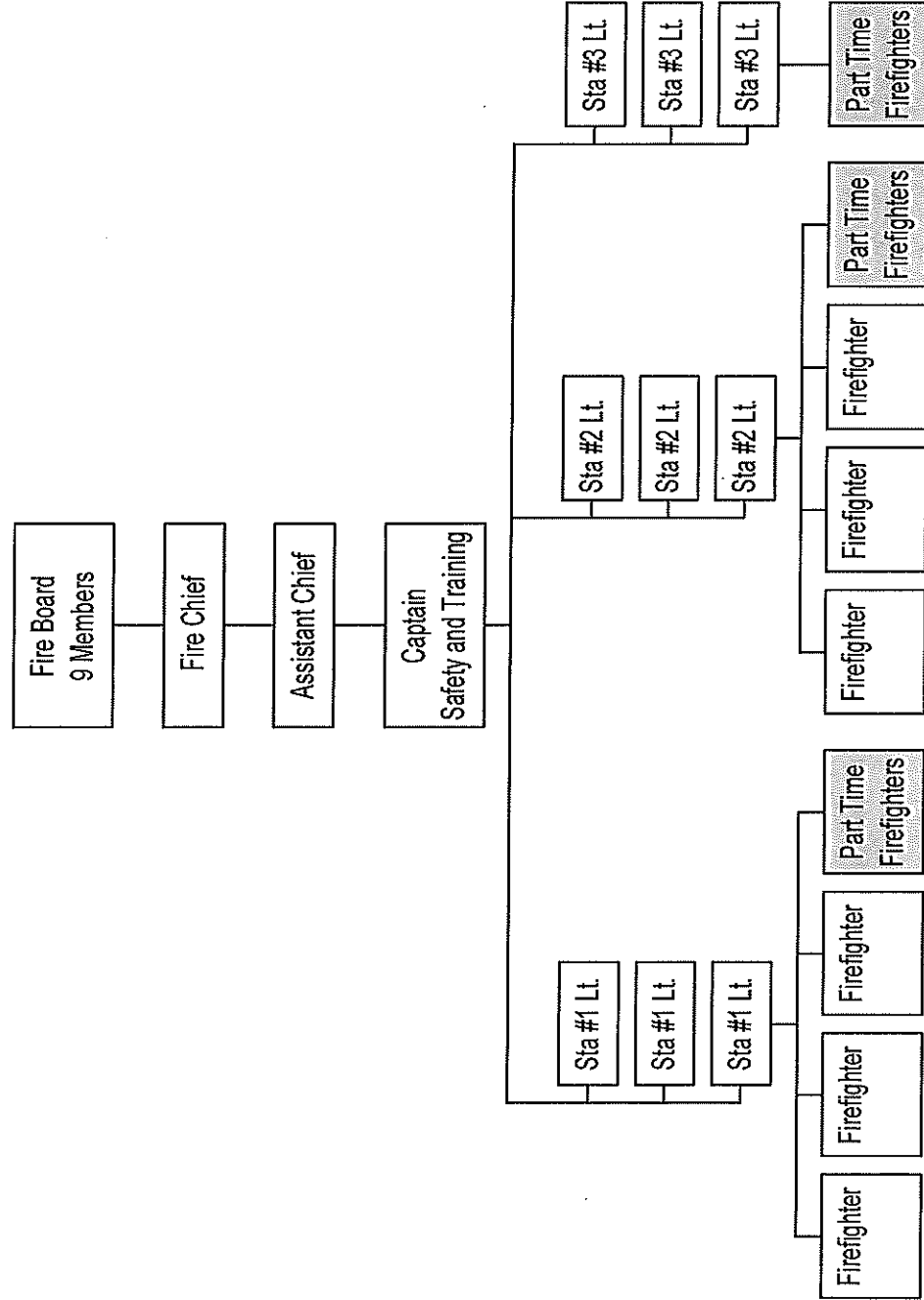
Scio Twp - 1 Lt & 1 FF or 2 FF

Dexter Twp - 1 Lt or 1 FF

This scenario takes into account that a single Lieutenant will be assigned to each station but will not be assigned to each work shift. Each Lieutenant will be assigned to a different shift so there is always a Lieutenant on duty.

This scenario will require use of (8) additional personnel to supplement the shifts due to lack of full time personnel - total of 15 shift people required in this scenario to cover 3 shifts of 24 hours.

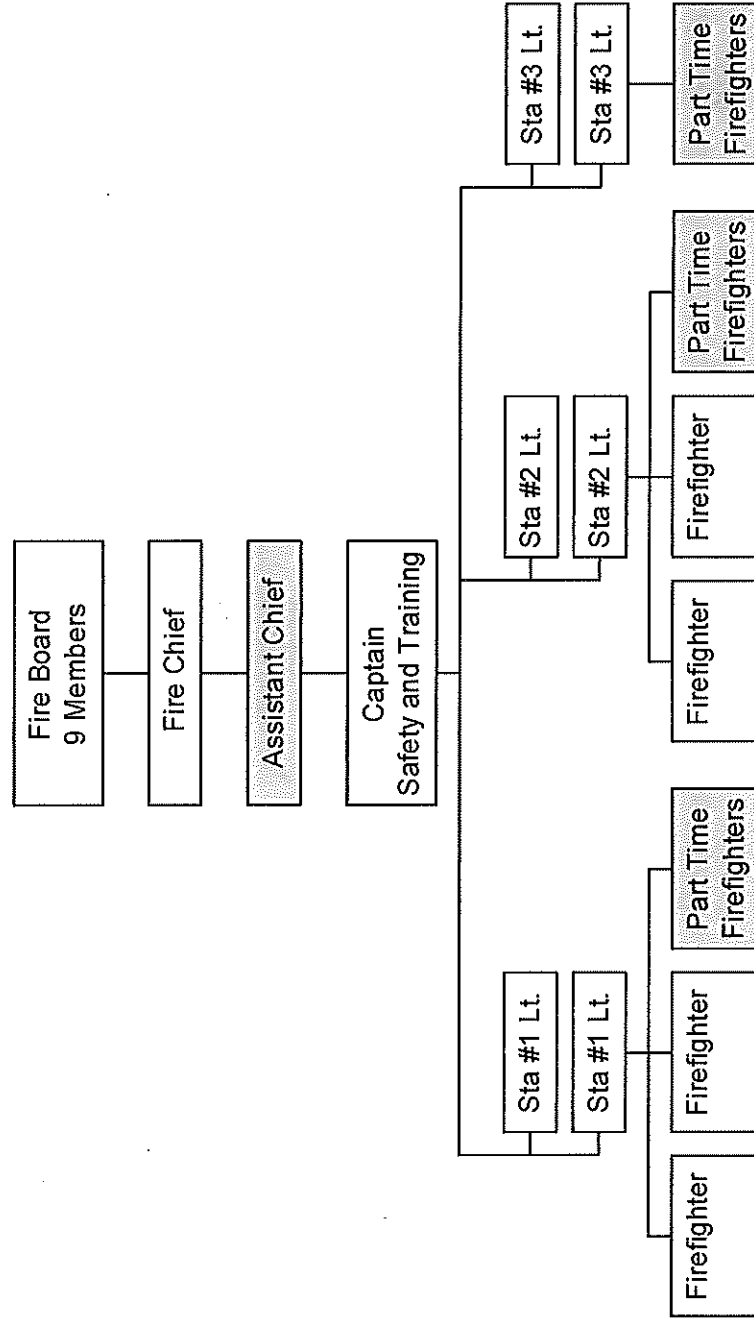
Western Washtenaw Fire Department
Organizational Chart Plan B
After Transition Period



Assumptions:

- All positions are full time except for part time firefighters
- Stations will each have 1 Lieutenant for each shift
- Assistant Chief is 40 hour/week
- Captain is 40 hour/week
- Staffing = 5 personnel per 24 hour shift - 3 shifts each station
- On duty:
Dexter Village - 1 Lt & 1 FF
Scio Twp - 1 Lt & 1 FF
Dexter Twp - 1 Lt
- This scenario takes into account that a Lieutenant will be assigned on each shift at each station.
- 5 additional personnel will be required to supplement the full time staffing
- 15 shift personnel to cover 3 shifts of 24 hours

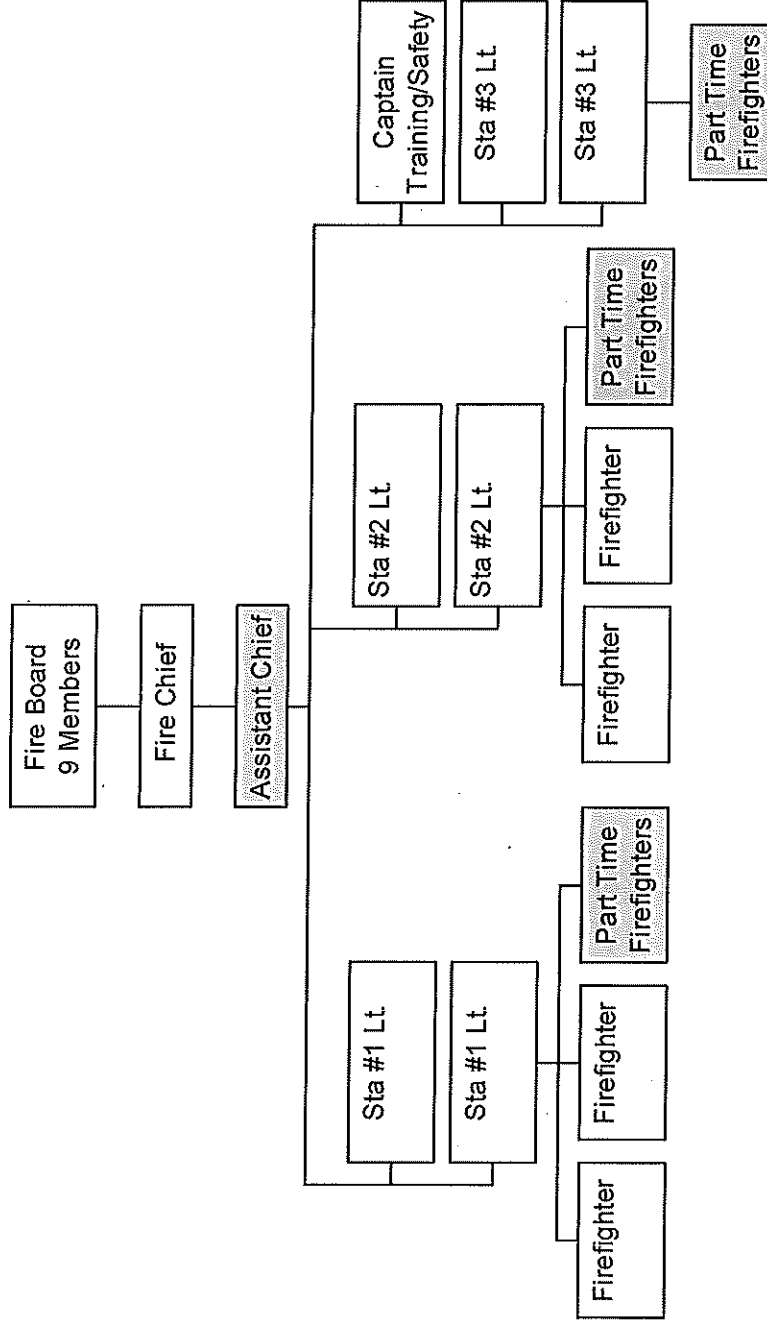
Western Washtenaw Fire Department
Organizational Chart Plan C
After Transition Period



Assumptions:

- Scenario uses existing personnel with no additional full time staff
- Stations will each have 1 Lieutenant or Acting Lieutenant for each shift
- Assistant Chief is part time position
- Captain is 40 hr/week
- Staffing = 5 personnel per 24 hour shift – 3 shifts each station
- On duty:
Dexter Village – 1 Lt & 1 FF or 1 Acting Lt. & 1 FF
Scio Twp – 1 Lt & 1 FF or 1 Acting Lt & 1 FF
Dexter Twp – 1 Lt. or 1 Acting Lt.
- 5 additional personnel will be need to supplement the full time shift assignments

Western Washtenaw Fire Department
Organizational Chart Plan D
After Transition Period



Assumptions:

- Scenario uses existing personnel with no additional full time staff
- Stations will each have 1 Lieutenant or Acting Lieutenant for each shift
- Dexter Twp station will have the Training Captain running one shift and Lieutenants on other two shifts.
- Assistant Chief is part time position
- Captain is working shift
- Staffing = 5 personnel per 24 hour shift - 3 shifts each station
- On duty:
Dexter Village - 1 Lt & 1 FF or 1 Acting Lt. & 1 FF
Scio Twp - 1 Lt & 1 FF or 1 Acting Lt & 1 FF
Dexter Twp - 1 Lt or 1 Captain
- 10 part time positions will be needed to supplement the full time shift assignments

